


Restriction Requirement

Applicants respectfully traverse the Restriction Requirement and submit that the claims of the two groups designated by the Examiner are closely interrelated from a patentability assessment standpoint, that is the two groups are not independent and distinct. In addition, Applicants maintain that the claims of the two designated groups have not actually acquired a separate status in the art, notwithstanding different art classifications which may be artificially assigned for mere cataloging purposes. Therefore, in order to preserve the unity of the invention, both groups should be prosecuted in the same application. Prosecuting both groups together would eliminate duplication of search efforts, thereby simplifying Patent Office examination work.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the Restriction Requirement and allow claims 1-101 to be prosecuted in the same application. In the event that the Examiner's Restriction Requirement is made final, Applicants reaffirm the provisional election of claims 1-85 above for continued prosecution, holding claims 86-101 in abeyance under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.142(b) until final disposition of the elected claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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